

INFANCY

- 453 Babies are encouraged to nurse as soon as possible. If a mother's milk fails or proves unsuited, as judged from the appearance of a child's skin, tongue, or excreta, any friendly lactating woman may be called upon for help. Sometimes, a group of helpers may work in shifts, with one nursing a child early in the morning, another in the forenoon, a third at noon, and so on. Sometimes, too, in polygynous households, comates [595] may help to suckle each other's young. "No how," exclaimed Collio in one of his interviews, "will they let a baby starve!" One Araucanian man told me that he had been suckled, at least in part, by the wife of his oldest paternal uncle; a paternal grandmother helped with the nursing of another. Such evidence confirms the importance of the household unit as a basic, functional group of kindred, for each of these wet nurses, through the agency of unilocal, patrilocal residence, was a housemate of the child she helped to suckle.

- 553 The concept that the first few days of an infant's life constitute a kind of trial period also finds expression in the naming customs. No discussion of a name takes place before a baby is at least a week old and has given indication that it is in good health and will probably live. The option of naming a first child customarily belongs to the paternal grandparents, but if they have many descendants they may, out of courtesy, transfer the privilege to the mother's parents. Either the grandfather or grandmother, depending on the sex of the infant, serves as godparent, holding the babe in his arms, and giving it his own name before witnesses.¹⁴ So closely is the custom followed that the term *i-aka*, father's father, also means namesake, and the naming rite is called *i-akaten*.¹⁵ If he can afford it, a godparent gives presents to a namesake. Traditionally, the gifts

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421 [835] for as much as a year or eighteen months. Very likely, the abandonment of polygyny has led to an earlier resumption of sexual relations.

¹⁴ A variant account of naming practices occurs in Hensley, 1939, pp. 155 ff.

¹⁵ *I-aka* is a reciprocal term for a man's father's father and son's son, and *chaka* or *llalle* refers to a woman's mother's mother or daughter's daughter (Figs. 1, 3). Argüeso (1906, I: 109) gave *namasake* as one of the meanings of *i-aka*.

846 compassionate friend. At the end of this time she bathed again, and returned to her own home, where all her relations and friends were assembled to celebrate a feast in honour of the babe. These customs are at present considerably modified, and the birth takes place in the room itself. The mother takes up a kneeling posture during labour, holding on by a thing fastened to a post. She is attended by her friends, and a midwife (*alpatru*) assists at the birth. The men retire outside the hut and receive with laughter and coarse jokes the complaints of the sufferer and the cries of the newly born. After the birth both mother and babe are bathed.

553 The baptism and naming of the child take place shortly afterwards. Some friend of the father offers himself as godfather (*hues*), and requests that the babe, if it is a boy, may bear his name, the celebration feast being at his expense. Among other presents he provides a sheep, with the blood of which crosses are made on the forehead and temples of the child. This is an innovation of Christian origin, and dates from the time of the Spanish conquest. In the neighbourhood of the towns and missions the children frequently receive a Christian baptism, and take as names the most common of the calendar, their father's name posing as a surname.

846 A man does not cohabit with his wife after childbirth till the child is weaned, which does not take place till it has cut all its teeth.

853 When a man dies his eldest son inherits his wife, together with his other property, and from that moment takes them to wife himself, save only his mother, who recovers her freedom and may marry again. If he leaves no son, his eldest brother inherits and acquires the same rights. Sometimes the wives are distributed among all the brothers of the deceased in order of priority of marriage, the first married to the eldest brother, etc., or they can recover their liberty on paying to the heir the price they cost.

63 *Tabaco*.—Although tobacco is not in vogue among this race at the present day, there is reason to suppose that it was so at an early period.

The probability of exogenous marriage customs having formerly existed has already been referred to.

551 The custom, at one time universal, of giving children the names of animals, birds, or inanimate objects seems to indicate that these names might have belonged to the clan totem, especially as even recently it was no uncommon thing to find common persons in the same family group with the same name, only modified by some distinguishing adjective, as *Pahuel*, tiger; *Pahuelchil*, red tiger; *Aikah-iyel*, leaping tiger; *Loma*, house; *Akhuil*, two houses; *Lomahuel*, house's head; *Pila*, snake; *Qulchil*, three snakes; *Chilchil*, red snake, etc., etc. These names have gradually changed into common ones, owing to the custom of giving the children other names at baptism.

113 The Araucanians believe they originally descended from the animals whose names they bear, but have no clear idea as to whether this descent was on their mother's or on their father's side, although most of them incline to the former.

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, vol. XXIX, 1908, Plate XXX.

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GROUP OF THE ARCHAIC OF THE ARAUCANIAN.

[End plate 3]

FIRST CLOTHES

In the early days a little girl who had learned proper toilet habits was dressed in clothes modeled on those worn by adult women (cf. pp. 223-224). The chamall used was either woven especially for her or cut from an old one. Until a little boy learned proper toilet habits he was dressed in a skirtlike diaper as were girls. After that he wore his chamall like a man's chiripa, that is, drawn forward between the legs and tucked under a belt. He also wore a poncho, "just like grown-up men do." At present an occasional child is dressed as formerly, but most children are dressed in modern clothes like Chilean children. Rarely does a child have a hat or shoes, even today; formerly all were bareheaded and barefooted. 291

NURSING, WEANING

Before the baby's first nursing, the midwife, or, in her absence, someone else who knows how, pokes a finger down its throat and then pours into it the juice of a leaf of paico or a teaspoonful of a concentrated decoction of a leaf of paico. The leaf is heated near the fire and its sap squeezed out by hand. The baby will gag and throw up the phlegm that has been in its throat. The baby is nursed for the first time when the mother returns from her bath. 253 ●

If the mother has no milk flow after delivery, she is given the sap of the root of pil in water gotten from flowing water, usually a spring. She drinks of this mixture two or three times and also washes her breasts with it. She eats no special foods to cause an increase in milk flow, but she does eat larger quantities of available foods, especially toasted wheat and roasted corn. These cereals, generally mixed with warm water, she eats alternately in warm and cold water, the belief being that if eaten in warm water only they will make the baby lact. [278]

The child is nursed whenever it cries. "The mother knows that it is hungry then." It is given both breasts at each nursing and is nursed "until it wants no more." If a baby persists in crying after it is nursed, or cries and refuses to nurse, it is thought to be sick. Relief is then sought from an herbalist, a specialist. General household remedies do not seem to include any for sick babies. On rare occasions a machilon (a shamanistic ceremonial) is performed over the sick baby. "Mothers cannot bear to hear a baby cry," said a non-Araucanian herbalist. "If one persists in crying, the father comes and asks for a remedy. I usually suggest that the mother refrain from eating highly spiced foods, and I give him herbs from which to make decoctions. [22]

- 853 I have known Mapuche herbalists to stay eight days with a crying baby or a sick child, and boil decoctions for it."

A child is always nursed until it is a year old, unless the mother is again pregnant, but it is seldom nursed when older than two years. (Pl. 3, 2.) It is nursed tied in its cradleboard, resting in its mother's arm, sitting on its mother's lap, or standing near its mother. During an interview of an hour, a mother nursed her baby whenever it began to fuss, which was about every 10 minutes. The baby was then tied to its cradleboard to be photographed, but immediately after the picture was taken the mother sat on a low bench and again nursed the baby still strapped to the cradle, which stood in an upright position.

During an interview with another mother her 20-month-old boy became bothersome. She then nursed him lying in her lap until he fell asleep. When he awoke, she again nursed him; this time he rested on his knees in her lap. When he began to move about in her lap, she let him slide off and nursed him standing at her side.

[197] When the mother cannot satisfy the child with her own milk, she gives it soup, and/or commercially condensed milk mixed with water, and/or boiled milk of a fresh cow. "We put this in a bottle with a nipple. One can buy these in Chilean stores. We learned this from the Chileans."

862 The child is weaned by gradually accustoming it to a series of solid foods, "the same foods that everyone else eats. It is best, however, to begin with cow's milk, so that it gets used to new tastes gradually." Following this, it is fed toasted wheat, *catuto* (made of cooked wheat), new potatoes, and later meat. After the child is completely weaned it may be given anything to eat except apples and plums. "We believe that a weaned child still has mother's milk in its body and that these fruits will sour the milk."

Weaning is accomplished by mother and baby living apart. Either the baby may be placed with a neighbor or relative, "like its grandmother or an aunt," and left there two or three days, or it may be left in the care of an older sister at home while the mother visits a few days away from home. If the child is not weaned when it is again with its mother, it is separated from the mother once more. The mother does not use a repellent, such as a peppery or a bitter substance on her breasts. According to Cooper's source, the child was weaned when all its teeth were cut, or a year after its birth; or if the child was weak, not until it was 18 months, or older (1946, p. 731).

Only an occasional child sucks its finger. Two instances came to the writer's notice: one was two years of age; the other, nearly three. Both sucked the first finger of the right hand.

In teaching a child to walk, many mothers still follow the traditional custom of making a pathway just wide enough for the child to walk in between two rows of cunibite sticks. The sticks are crutched at the top and are planted a foot apart. In the crutches of each row, cunibite poles are placed horizontally and fastened. The child is taught to hold onto the horizontal poles and crouched to move forward by its mother who is at the other end of the pathway. She will be saying, "Come! Come! Come!" A listener-in remarked, "After a child has once learned to walk by this method, it can be crouched to walk to other places by telling it to come to get something." A young mother had recently taught her child to walk by having it hold onto a low bench, and then to take steps to keep up with the bench as she moved it forward. If a child a year old makes no attempt to walk, the mother will switch its calves lightly with cotton. The child will then take steps to get away from the sting of the cotton.

A toddler old enough to run away is tied to a stationary object with a rope long enough to let it move around to play. "I often tied my children to a tree at that age, especially when I was weaning." A child's first crawling or walking is not celebrated as an event; informants were amused at the thought.

Nothing was done to bring about early speech development. "If the time has not yet come for the child to talk, it will not talk; when it is old enough to do so, it will talk." At about 10 months the mother begins to teach it words, usually names, such as "father" and "mother." "It is done like this—at least I did it this way," said a 6½-year-old woman. "I took a piece of bread and let the child hold it while I said, 'Bread,' and then I took it away from the child. The child would laugh. Then I would show the child the piece of bread again, and say, 'Bread. Bread. Bread.' I repeated this on different days, and soon the child said, 'Bread.'" Another mother, also in her thirties, had not used the above method but had shown a child bread or maybe a cup, and said, "Get me that bread," or "Get me that cup." Other mothers had merely talked to the child, and "the child learned to speak Araucanian as it learns to speak Argentine today." Today a child a year old speaks Araucanian if it is raised in a house where that language is spoken. "Formerly, everyone had to learn Araucanian; our parents would not allow us to speak Argentine; we had to speak Araucanian."

FEEDING, WEANING

Mothers nursed their children unless an unusual situation arose. (53) for it was believed that mother's milk aided the child in developing a

• **ES3** Strong constitution. An instance was related in which one of nine girls refused to nurse from its mother, and so the mother's sister, who was nursing a child at the time, nursed it for a month; after this the baby was taken back to its home and fed cow's milk, "but it never seemed to fit into its home and so later the grandmother took it to her home and nursed it." A nursing mother was given no herbal decoction to increase the milk flow, but she ate much nourishing food, such as chicken and mutton. She avoided beer, since that was thought to make her sick.

A child was nursed whenever it became restless, whimpered, or indicated that it was hungry. During one 2-hour interview, a 14-year-old child nursed about every 10 minutes. It did so standing at the side of its mother (my informant) who was seated on the ground, resting in its mother's arms, or squatting in her lap. Successive nursings were from different breasts. In general, a child was probably not nursed after it was two years old. "Nursing a baby longer than two years makes it mean," said a 60-year-old woman.

One informant, now 60 years old, made certain, when she had a nursing child, that there was no male in the place. "We believe that if there is a male around it will come at night to where a mother will be nursing her child. Should the mother inadvertently fall asleep, the male will push the baby from the breast, put its tail into the baby's mouth, and suck the milk from the mother."

When the child is capable of holding something, usually when 3 or 4 months old, it is given a piece of meat—raw, cooked, broiled, or roasted—from which to suck the marrow. If adults were having soup (cheap soup filled with chili, salt, and coagulated blood; p. 36), the child was given a piece left to suck. Today a 4-month-old child is given cow's milk thinned with water, and this stops. I saw a young mother give her child at that age cow's milk in which she had cooked oatmeal brought at a store.

When a mother knew that the child could swallow foods other than soup, probably when 4 months old, she continued meat for it. "This is still done today. I saw a mother recently show someone some and give them to her child." The child's first solid food—a *currito*—was cooked meat of fish. It was also given mutton, lamb, and beef, but never beer, which was thought to make the child sick. As soon as a child has its teeth, it is expected to eat all kinds of foods by itself.

• **E** Children were generally weaned between the ages of one and two years. Some mothers weaned a child gradually by introducing it to food other than mother's milk; some did it abruptly. "I usually

grow older, competence is demanded by both parents, who expect considerable autonomy if chores are not performed well.

Parental annoyance does not often lead to physical punishment. Children are seldom punished, although often scolded. Parents and grandparents refer a small child to his den in a tantrum or playfully, telling them "Nol Nol Don't be naughty." As children grow older, they might be cuffed or whipped by their father, rarely by their mother. There is nothing systematic about this sort of punishment. It seems to occur in a fit of parental temper, which is suppressed when the child is young.

A mother enjoys suckling her children and gives them the breast to soothe them. It is not uncommon to see children with a full set of teeth taking their mother's breast under certain circumstances, often when the mother and child are away from home and the child is tired and restless. I have seen it occur at funerals, weddings, and religious ceremonies at which children whom I had previously thought were weaned took the breast along with a newborn sibling. It is said that in days of polygamous households co-wives took turns nursing each other's children, but as far as I could discover (and there were no nursing children in any of the polygamous households I visited, this does not occur today unless the mother has no milk or is otherwise indisposed. In that case the child is sometimes nursed by a relative or close friend or sometimes fed goat or camel milk, there being little fresh milk available on the reservation.

Both mother and father take an interest in their children's early training, although the mother has the most responsibility simply because she is with them more than the father. The Mapuche are not rigid in this training and apparently are not disturbed by a child's crying himself and the floor. Either the mother or the father sweeps or scrapes the excitement outside and cleans the child with a wet cloth.

One aspect of a child's early upbringing about which parents were rather stringent, at least in contrast to their permissive attitude in other respects, is in discouraging children from crawling. While there is some variation in the way this is done, one of the parents usually ties the child upon its feet or takes it in his lap. Formerly, children were trained in most households by means of a set of parallel sticks of bamboo strung in households along which the child could guide himself.

If the mother is the primary disciplinarian, she is also the main

this situation from firsthand knowledge, since in the polygynous households I knew there was usually such discrepancy between the youngest, most attractive woman and the other wives that favoritism toward the younger seemed not to disturb the others. The important thing in all situations of this sort seems to have been the ability of the polygynist to show equal attention to all wives in regard to the distribution of food, clothing, and other necessary and luxury goods. There quite possibly was an additional factor involved in the inheritance due to the sons of the older women, although my knowledge of this matter is too sketchy to permit generalization.

I was able to discover almost nothing about the status of the children of the several wives in polygynous households. If one wife dies in childbirth or while she is still suckling her infant, the other wives will take turns caring for the child, those lactating also giving it the breast. Apparently this is not done willingly, but at the command of the polygynist, who emphasizes the moral obligation the surviving wives owe to his heir.

A child soon comes to know its own mother. This results from the care she gives it and because she is the one who orders it about the household. As soon as the child is able to walk it begins performing small chores for its actual mother. If the polygynous family shares a common dwelling (as was the case in two situations I observed), the mother takes her children with her whenever she leaves the house. If her work outside the house, in the garden or fields, prevents her from taking an infant with her, another woman assumes the responsibility for its care — again a moral responsibility enforced by the husband. A child distinguishes between "own mother" (*kaŋke*) and "other mother" (*kaŋake*) in a polygynous household. Own mother may also be called *kaŋa*, a special term of endearment.

One thing that struck me as significant is that few grown sons and daughters were in evidence, although there were always small children. I was told that the young women who had not married had left the reservation for employment in Chilean towns, and that most of the young men had done likewise. Some of the grown sons had married unacillocally, for the usual reason that by doing so they obtained access to adequate land. In each household there was at least one adult son of the polygynist. Although these sons were of nubile age none had any plans for marriage while their father lived. They were usually but not always sons of the primary wife. It was asserted that none of the sons would inherit any of his father's wives through mar-

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